



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Emmanuel, and by the sensibility he has evinced at the injustice of partisans and the press. His readiness to withdraw to his island home, and to await another favorable moment to renew the war of Italian independence, suggests a more than Roman self-control; and that these proofs of heroic integrity are appreciated, even in the midst of political conflicts, is apparent from the enthusiastic cheers which rose as one spontaneous tribute from the Sardinian Parliament, when Count Cavour recently alluded to Garibaldi's great and glorious deeds.

Popular education and legislative reform have a vast work to achieve before the noblest fruits of political liberty can be matured. Accordingly, in the very hour of successful revolution, its ultimate harvest is a subject of the most diverse speculation. Yet let us not lose sight of the positive and permanent good effected with such chivalric promptitude. It is a great thing to have punished, however incompletely, a degraded and tyrannous dynasty; to have laid open the secret wickedness of a base and cruel government; to have set free thousands of innocent and tortured captives; to have exhibited to the world noble and disinterested achievements; to have awakened in a whole people the consciousness of rights regained and manhood reasserted; and thus to have acquired a new foothold for humanity, shaken despotism with remorseful alarm, and exhibited once more genuine patriotism as victorious and triumphant.

---

ART. III. — *History of Latin Christianity; including that of the Popes to the Pontificate of Nicholas V.* By HENRY HART MILMAN, D. D., Dean of St. Paul's. In Eight Volumes. New York: Sheldon & Co. 1860. Vol. I. Small 8vo. pp. 554.

Few subjects are more attractive to the historical student, and few could be rendered more interesting to the general reader, than the annals of the Christian Church. The rise of Christianity, its struggles and its victory over the mistress

of the world, develop a drama of unequalled majesty and importance. Its conflict with barbarism presents another series of events, different in character, but equally remarkable in themselves and in their results, gradually erecting the Church into a spiritual and temporal monarchy, heir to the old Pagan Empire, with whose broken fragments it perpetuates the domination of Augustus to the nineteenth century. Nor, when this triumph is fully attained, does the scene decline in interest. Spiritual tyranny provokes the succession of heresies, Albigenian and Lollard, Hussite and Lutheran, whose histories are rich in all that commands human sympathy; while the temporal assumptions of the Papacy give rise to a never-ending struggle, which leads us through the most romantic episodes of the Middle Age, and affords a shifting panorama, crowded with brilliant figures and diversified with the most striking incidents.

The mere collection of materials for such a history is a labor to appall the most strenuous industry, if the original sources be appealed to, as is requisite for all conscientious investigation. Patristic theology, in itself the study of a lifetime, affords the groundwork for the earlier annals; but a close and accurate familiarity with classical antiquities and the ancient historians and legislators can alone elucidate the struggles of the primitive Church and enable the writer to follow its progress step by step. A limitless mass of documents next claims his attention as necessary to the comprehension of the mediæval periods; controversialists and chroniclers, acts of Councils and Papal epistles, lives of the Saints, codes of laws, pious diplomas, every record that has escaped destruction, must be ransacked for the precious fragments of information which cement the massive facts of history, and give them cohesion and definite form. Secular and ecclesiastical history are too closely interlaced for either to be treated understandingly without a thorough mastery of the other; the condition of the people as well as of the Church must be comprehended before their mutual reactions can be discerned, and this is to be gathered only from scattered indications lying latent in writings designed for other purposes. The amount of material demanding minute and careful examination may be computed from the fact, that the latest collection of the

Fathers — the *Patrologia* of the Abbé Migne — comprises three hundred large and closely printed volumes, and extends only to the commencement of the thirteenth century. The Collection of Councils, promised by the same intrepid editor, is designed to occupy eighty volumes more. The *Acta Sanctorum*, commenced by Bollandus two hundred years ago, and not yet completed, fills thus far some fifty or sixty large folios; while the collections of diplomas and other similar documents published in France, Spain, England, Germany, and Italy, almost defy computation. All these are ecclesiastical, and, for the Dark Ages, furnish most of the secular material also; but as we approach the revival of letters the stream grows wider and deeper. State papers and lay historians increase in number and importance, and the sources of information multiply beyond the reach of a Ducange or a Magliabecchi.

While, therefore, we may deplore the absence of such a universal history of the Christian Church as we might desire, we may scarcely wonder at it. A more natural subject of surprise, however, is the singular barrenness of English literature, even in respectable failures. A century and a half ago, the erudition of Cave and Bingham, in a less enlightened time than ours, gave promise of a rich harvest, which is not yet garnered. Perhaps those best able to achieve the task are those who best know the almost insuperable difficulties surrounding it; and, estimating their acquisitions not by the narrower limits of others, but by the boundless horizon still before them, they shrink from teaching where so much still remains to learn. This reticence, pardonable in its motive, becomes reprehensible when it buries the results of laborious years, which should serve to guide the steps of future students. When, therefore, a man of well-earned reputation, like Dean Milman, breaks through this natural hesitation, we receive the fruits of his long vigils with grateful respect, assured that he brings to the work of his well-trained intellect all the assistance that a wide range of study, calm judgment, mature reflection, impregnable candor, and true liberality can afford to adorn a literature in which the names of Mosheim, Gieseler, Neander, Ranke, and D'Aubigné occupy a place too prominent to be gratifying to our Anglo-Saxon pride. Even more than all this, we feel, when abandoning ourselves to his guidance,

secure that, if he sometimes swerves from the stern rigidity of judicial impartiality, it is not at the dictation of controversial bitterness, but through the promptings of that Christian charity which looks on all mankind as the common children of a forgiving Father. We are glad, therefore, to seize the occasion offered us by the first volume of the new and beautiful edition of his "History of Latin Christianity," whose title stands at the head of this article, to recall the attention of our readers to the book, and to some of the more important subjects of which it treats.

The rise of the Bishop of Rome, from the persecuted head of an insignificant local church, to the supreme domination over both the spiritual and the temporal hierarchy of Europe, is one of the most curious problems of history. As a primary cause, it naturally suggests itself that Rome, the capital and centre of the world, must have conferred on all her dignitaries some pre-eminence, real if not nominal, over those of humbler sisters. The importance of her bishopric, from its various political bearings, as well as from the number and character of its church-members, would of course lead to the selection of the ablest and most influential of the Western Christians to fill the Episcopal chair, and these successive bishops, from the weight of their personal character, would transmit a gradually increasing power. The centralization of wealth in the Eternal City would also render the Roman See by far the richest in the Church, and its gold was liberally poured forth in assisting poorer communities, during the whole of the first three centuries,\* — a munificence which could not be solicited or enjoyed without an appreciable sacrifice of independence on the part of the recipients. Its missionary efforts, doubtless, had also a powerful influence in extending its authority, for it is probable that the conversion of the Western provinces was accomplished by emissaries from Rome, and the churches thus founded would naturally, in their infancy at least, look to Rome with peculiar veneration, as occurred long afterward in England, Christianized by Augustine, and in the regions converted by the labors of Willibrod and Boniface. The situation of the Roman Church in the seat of empire likewise opened

---

\* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. IV. c. 23.

innumerable sources of influence. If protection was to be solicited from local persecution, exemption to be sought from unjust or oppressive burdens, or other favor to be procured from the Imperial court, the Bishop of Rome was the natural channel through which the suppliants would address their master, and the relations thus established would inevitably tend to render the Roman Church the protector of her nominal equals. When, therefore, she proffered advice, it was not lightly to be rejected, for the next hour might render her interference necessary, or her benevolence invaluable; and if her tone gradually grew authoritative, and counsel imperceptibly assumed the form of command, she was but yielding to temptations irresistible to human nature. A passage in Tertullian shows us that this took place at an early period, and also that it was regarded as a usurpation founded on no acknowledged claim;\* but such assertions of independence only prove the progress making by the silent encroachments of the central power. From the mutual interaction of these various causes, the impulse thence arising would of course acquire strength from its very progress. When the democratic simplicity of apostolic times was lost, and when, after its three centuries of conflict, the religion of Christ achieved its triumph and became an affair of state, in meeting the necessity for a more elaborate system of ecclesiastical polity, the See of Rome would naturally appear the one called upon to furnish the chief that was needed in the new order of things.

Events, however, did not proceed quite so rapidly as might have been anticipated. The Church, as it increased in numbers and influence, had divided itself into dioceses corresponding with the great prefectures of the Empire, and these again into provinces, according to the civil demarcations, the seat of local government being the head of the local church. Throughout the East there thus arose a complete hierarchy of Bishops, Metropolitans, and Exarchs, or Patriarchs, which varied as the political divisions of their territories were altered; and so complete was the dependence of ecclesiastical arrangements upon the order of civil government, that, as late as 451, among the

---

\* "Audio etiam edictum esse propositum, et quidem peremptorium: Pontifex scilicet maximus, Episcopus Episcoporum dicit, ego et mœchiæ et fornicationis delicta pœnitentia functis dimitto." — Tertul. de Pudicit., c. 1.

canons of the Council of Chalcedon is one directing that changes in the civil hierarchy should be conformed to by corresponding alterations in the Church.\* The Patriarchs of the apostolic sees of Antioch and Alexandria, and the Exarchs of the less distinguished churches of Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Heraclea, were thus independent of all clerical authority † save that of General Councils, until the policy of Constantine erected a superior, when he conferred the Patriarchate on the suffragan Bishop of Byzantium, whom the favor of succeeding Emperors elevated to the headship of the Eastern Church. ‡ The ecclesiastical constitution of the West was more simple. In Spain, Gaul, and Britain, there would seem to have been no definite primatial head, various sees arrogating to themselves and contesting with one another a transient superiority, as the vicissitudes of personal influence or political fortune afforded the opportunity. Africa, under the lead of Carthage, by turns yielded obedience to, and claimed independence of, Rome, as the policy of the moment was dictated by internal or external pressure. Italy was divided into two vicariates, of which Milan ruled the northern and Rome the southern provinces, and so precarious was the general supremacy of the latter, that in the sixth century the Archbishops of Ravenna affected airs of equality, in consequence of the residence of the Imperial exarchs in that city; while, as late as the eleventh century, the Milanese clergy, appealing to the old traditions of their church, disclaimed the authority of the Popes, set them at defiance, and were forced to abate their pre-

---

\* “Si vero quælibet civitas per auctoritatem imperialem renovata est, aut si renovabitur in posterum, civilibus et publicis ordinationibus etiam ecclesiarum parochianarum ordinationes conformentur.” — Concil. Chalced., can. 17.

† It is rather curious that the forged donation of Constantine, manufactured in the eighth century, should contain a special grant to Rome of supremacy over the churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, thus attributing that supremacy to an earthly, not a divine source, and admitting, even at that day, that a falsehood was necessary to substantiate claims of authority for which, at the same time, an antiquity coeval with the Christian religion was assumed.

‡ The progress toward supremacy of a church thus favored is shown by an edict which Atticus of Constantinople, in the early part of the fifth century, obtained from Theodosius the younger, ordering that throughout the Eastern Empire no bishop should be ordained without the consent and authority of the Patriarch of the Imperial City. Socrat. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VII. Cap. XXVIII.

tensions only after a desperate war of nearly thirty years. This subordinate position of the Roman bishops is shown by the fact that they were not even gratified with the title of Patriarch until Marcian used it in addressing Leo the Great, about the middle of the fifth century ;\* and while the prelate of Antioch had under his jurisdiction fifteen metropolitan bishops, his brother of Rome was merely himself a metropolitan as regarded the suffragans of the Suburbicarian Sees.† The quarrels between the East and the West, however, gave the successors of St. Peter frequent opportunities of placing themselves forward as the champions of Western Christianity, and the churches which, in the hour of trial, sought their assistance, could not do so without a sacrifice of independence. Thus, when the Latin bishops, at the Synod of Sardica, in 347, endeavored to protect themselves from the Arian tendencies and persecutions of their Eastern brethren, they constituted Julius I. an arbiter to grant appeals in cases of condemnation. The language of the canon shows this to have been a novel privilege, bestowed by them of their own free will ;‡ and it doubtless consoled the Pope for the denunciations launched against him by the Eastern portion of the Synod, although neither the donors nor the recipient of the favor could anticipate the immense impulse which its extension would give to the growing power of the Roman See. The ceaseless dissensions which distracted the Eastern churches also contributed not a little to the influence and importance

---

\* Giannone, *Ist. Civ. di Napoli*, Lib. II. Cap. VIII. — The title of Patriarch, however, had no very distinct signification at that period. Athalaric alludes to several Patriarchs as subject to the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths. Goldast. *Constit. Imp.* III. 107.

† The sixth canon of Nicæa, which has served as the basis of assumptions of exclusive superiority for the Bishop of Rome, is too equivocal in its signification to have much authority. The version of Rufinus accords with the statement in the text, while the advocates of the Papal views have alleged in evidence glosses from various manuscripts. It was not until 607 that Boniface III., taking advantage of a favorable political conjuncture, obtained from the usurper Phocas a recognition of the superiority of Rome over Constantinople. *Anast. Biblioth.*, No. LXVIII. Giannone (*Ist. Civ. di Napoli*, Lib. II. Cap. VIII.) gives a good description of the territorial divisions of the early Church ; also, Cabassut, *Synop. Concil. sub Can. Nicæen.*

‡ “*Si vestræ dilectionæ videtur, Petri Apostoli memoriam honoremus ut ab iis qui judicaverunt scribatur Julio Romanorum episcopo.*” — *Synod. Sardic.*, can. 3, 4, 5.



of the Popedom. Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople by turns sought the intervention of Rome, as each might hope to gain an ally in some death-struggle with its competitors, and every time the arbiter was called in he assumed more significantly the air of an *ex officio* judge. Yet his jurisdiction was by no means recognized, nor was the canon of Sardica admitted in practice. When, a century later, the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon enacted that appeals from the decisions of bishops might be made directly to the Patriarch of Constantinople, without intermediate steps,\* it shows that the jurisdiction of Rome was not thought of beyond the limits of its own province; nor did the aspiring Leo, who then occupied the chair of St. Peter, protest against it as a disregard of his privileges. In the next century, this distinction of the Constantinopolitan See was withdrawn by the legislation of Justinian,† but there is still no mention of any ultimate appeal to Rome.

It is evident from all this that Constantine, when making the Christian religion dominant, had no thought of placing it under the control of a supreme and irresponsible chief, or of abandoning an iota of the imperial power. Not only did Sylvester I. occupy a position of no especial super-eminence in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but then, and for centuries later, the Church was completely subordinate to the state. The bold stand made by Liberius in favor of the Athanasian Creed against the heretical Emperor Constantius, although an evidence of rising authority and independence on the part of the champion of the Western Church, shows also, by his defeat, that the time had not yet come for such assumptions. Faith and discipline, the internal polity and the external privileges of the Church, were all subjected to the supremacy of the temporal power. For centuries the confirmation of the Emperor was requisite to give validity to the canons of General Councils, relating exclusively to ecclesiastical affairs; nor was that consent by any means given as a matter of course.‡ The

\* "Si quis vero putaverit se a proprio metropolitano gravari, apud primatem dioceseos, aut apud Constantinopolitanæ civitatis sedem agat judicium." — Concil. Chalced., can. 17. The principle is more fully developed in can. 9.

† Novell. 123, cap. 22.

‡ Thus we find Constantius vetoing a portion of the canons of the Council of

constitutions of the Christian Emperors, from Constantine to Justinian, manifest the most absolute subordination of the spiritual to the secular authority. The minutiae of church government, the relations of the clergy among themselves and to the state, their duties, their morals, their lives, and their actions, monastic regulations, the suppression of heresies,—all are defined in a spirit of unquestioned autocracy, and with a care which shows how large a part of the Imperial attention was devoted to the management of ecclesiastical affairs. Under this despotic sovereignty of the temporal head of the Church, the loftiest prelates were but subjects, whose first duty was obedience; and a long line of feeble and worthless Cæsars was requisite before the able and vigorous men who occupied the chair of St. Peter could emancipate themselves from the traditions of Imperial authority. When, in the early part of the fifth century, Boniface and Eulalius, the rival candidates for the Papacy, filled Rome with their dissensions, the decision of the quarrel was referred as a matter of course to the miserable shadow of an Emperor,—Honorius,—who appointed a vicar to act as temporary Pope during his examination of the matter, and, after its settlement, issued an edict to regulate Papal elections for the future, and to prevent the recurrence of scenes so disgraceful.\* Even after the fall of the Western Empire, some eighty years later, when a similar quarrel arose between Symmachus and Laurence, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, then king of Italy, exercised the same functions, although, as an Arian, he was little better than Pagan in the eyes of all true Catholics. He elevated Symmachus to the pontifical throne, while he gratified the defeated aspirant with a bishopric, and then, assembling a synod, he caused the passage of a canon designed to restrain the turbulent and criminal ambition which brought so much dishonor on the Christian name,†—acts of

---

Rimini, in 360 (Lib. XVI. Cod. Theod. Tit. II. c. 15). But a more instructive example is that of the Council of Ephesus, in 431, whose disgraceful proceedings, conducted by Cyril, were formally approved by the rescript of Theodosius II. and Valentinian III., and then, on further information, were pronounced null and void by a subsequent decree. (Goldast. Const. Imp. III. 596, 597.)

\* Goldast. Const. Imp. III. 587–592.

† Car. Sigon. de Occident. Imp. Lib. XVI.—The acts of this Council represent it as having been assembled and presided over by Symmachus; but the statement of

sovereign jurisdiction which prove how futile had been the pretensions to spiritual supremacy invoked, not long before, by Gelasius.

The Fourth Council of Rome, in 502, made a strenuous effort to declare its independence of the secular authority, but Theodoric paid little attention to such assertions when, on suspicion of treason, John I. was thrown into the prison, where, by dying, he earned the honors of martyrdom;\* nor was Athalaric, the next Ostrogothic monarch, less absolute in his domination over ecclesiastical affairs. Among his constitutions is one, addressed to John II., respecting the simony then prevalent in episcopal and Papal elections, in which, under a thin veil of respect, he regulates these tender points of discipline in a manner sufficiently imperious to show that the Pope was his subject as thoroughly as any other dignitary, and

---

Signonius is borne out by the fact that Athalaric alludes to the law as emanating from Theodoric, his immediate predecessor (Athalar. Const. X. ap. Goldast. III. 95), to whom Theodorus Lector also attributes it, according to Goldastus (III. 613). When, two years later, another synod was convened, in 501, to consider certain accusations against Symmachus, it was by command of Theodoric, — “Cum ex diversis provinciis ad urbem Romam convenire sacerdotes regia præcipisset auctoritas” (Synod. Roman. III.); and when the bishops demurred to sitting in judgment on their superior, Theodoric reassured them by showing that Symmachus had requested him to call them together for that purpose, thus proving that the Pope recognized this power as belonging to the king, and not to himself. In fact, the pretensions of the Roman See to the sole authority in convoking Councils are too late in their origin and are too flatly contradicted by the history of the Church under the Empire, to merit extended examination. The lost canon of the Nicene Council — “Non debere præter sententiam Romani Episcopi concilia celebrari” — might be quoted on the authority of the False Decretals (Pseudo-Julii Epist. 2), but could not be found. The argument in favor of the prerogative may be seen briefly stated in Cabassut's Synopsis Concil. sub. Conc. Chalced.

The appointment by Theodoric of an ecclesiastic as “visitor,” with power to regulate the disorders of the Roman Church, was condemned by the synod of 501, as subversive of subordination, and the indignation which could not be gratified upon the king was poured forth on the unfortunate visitor. A curious instance of regal control over matters purely canonical is given by a rescript of Theodoric granting a dispensation for a marriage between cousins. Const. CCL. (Goldast. III. 91.)

\* Martyrol. Roman. Maii 27. The assertion of the martyrologists that John perished under the persecuting zeal of the Arians, comes with an ill grace from those who for more than thirty years had enjoyed the toleration of Theodoric, — a toleration of which none but Arians at that time were capable.

that his jurisdiction over the Church was as complete as over the state.\*

The kingdom of Italy, which under Theodoric had for a brief space rivalled the civilization of former ages, soon became the battle-field on which Goth, Greek, and Lombard by turns exercised a precarious dominion. When the victorious lieutenants of Justinian broke the power of the Goths, the Popes were transferred anew to the sovereignty of the Emperors, and the occupant of the pontifical throne during the revolution was the sport of both parties. Silverius, appointed to the Papacy by the heretical King Theodatus, was deposed and banished by Belisarius, nominally on a charge of treason, but in reality on account of his unbending orthodoxy in resisting the commands of the Catholic Justinian with regard to the Patriarch Anthemius. Nor was his successor, Vigilius, who had largely contributed to his downfall, more fortunate. Summoned to Constantinople in 544, Vigilius was exposed by Justinian to the most ignominious punishment and the strictest imprisonment. Whether it was for his contumacy with regard to the Three Chapters, or for the crimes alleged against him by the Romans, is a question of little moment to us; and if his ill-treatment was due to the vindictive zeal of Theodora, the humiliation was the more poignant, as exercised by a courtesan against the successor of St. Peter.†

During this disastrous reunion of Italy to the Empire, the interminable Monothelite controversy followed close upon the Monophysite heresy, and lent its powerful aid in imbittering the relations of Rome and Constantinople. Among the ecclesiastical prerogatives of the Cæsars had always been reckoned the right of dictating to the Church its form of belief; and whether the reigning conscience was orthodox or Arian, Nestorian or Eutychian, efficacious means were always found to enforce conformity on the part of the hierarchy. The Western Emperors, for the most part, had troubled themselves

---

\* For instance, — “Vos autem qui patriarcharum honore reliquis præsedetis ecclesiis, quoniam constitutio nostra ab illicita promissione liberavit, restat ut bona imitantes exempla, sine aliquo ecclesiarum dispendio dignos majestate pontifices offeratis.” — Athal. Constit. XXXVII. (Goldast. III. 107.)

† Anastas. Biblioth., No. LV., LX., LXI. (ap. Abbon. Floriac.); Victor Tunensis. Chron., ann. 542–544; Liberat. Breviar. c. 22 (Canisii Thesaur. I. 330, 331).

but little with the niceties of theological speculation, and the Arian Goths had tolerantly respected the established worship of Rome; but when Italy found herself under the despotic rule of the successors of Justinian, the pretensions of the Holy See, as the arbiter of Christian doctrine, led to numerous and intricate quarrels. It would be foreign from our purpose to enter into these dreary details; suffice it to say that the arbitrary rule of the sovereign, when it could not enforce an unworthy submission, had no hesitation in inflicting exemplary chastisement, as Martin I. experienced, when, in 649, he ended his days in exile for anathematizing the *Type* by which Constantins II. endeavored to put an end to the controversy as to the single or double will in Christ,—and this in spite of the miracle which had protected the Holy Father from the first unhallowed attempt upon his person.\* If the next Emperor, Constantine Pogonatus, remitted to the Popes the payment previously exacted on their installation, he was careful to retain the right of confirming their election; † but the diminishing influence of Greece was manifested by the failure of Justinian II. when he endeavored to follow the example of his grandfather, and to punish Pope Sergius for contumacy with regard to the acts of the *Quinisext in Trullo*, and Sergius enjoyed the rare and holy triumph of rescuing his intended captor, Zacharias the Protospatharius, from the enraged populace of Rome.‡

Notwithstanding these frequent reverses, the power and in-

---

\* Anastas Biblioth., No. LXXVI.

† “Suscepit etiam divalem jussionem, secundum suam postulationem, qua relevata est quantitas, quæ solita erat dari pro ordinatione pontificis, sic tamen ut si contingerit post ejus transitum electionem fieri, non debeat ordinari nisi prius decretum generale introducat a regia urbe, secundum antiquam consuetudinem.” — Ibid., No. LXXXI. That this right of confirmation was not an empty ceremony was rendered manifest on numerous occasions. The application of the Romans to Justinian for the appointment of Pelagius I. implores him, — “tunc cum vestra præceptione donetur nobis Pelagius noster archidiaconus” (Ibid. No. LXI.); and as Pelagius had long resided in Constantinople as *Apocrisarius*, the election was probably as idle a form as that of the Merovingian bishops. When Gregory the Great desired to avoid the burdens of the Papacy, he endeavored to accomplish his object by secretly entreating the Emperor Maurice to refuse his assent to the election, showing that the right of rejection was fully recognized as comprehended in that of confirmation. (Jaffé, Regesta, ann. 590.)

‡ Anastas. Biblioth., No. LXXXVI.

fluence of the Apostolic See were making steady progress throughout the West, and especially in Italy, during this period. The Greeks were foreign masters, exercising an odious despotism ; the Lombards were a perpetual menace and an unceasing scourge. Between the two powers, almost equally hateful, stood the Popes, the sole representatives of nationality, the sole defenders against tyranny. As the one permanent institution amid incessant change, the Papacy was the only centre round which the national spirit could rally ; and the increase of its temporal as well as spiritual authority appeared to be the only feasible means of escape from the anarchy which prevailed. This conviction was doubtless strengthened by the elective nature of the office, which made the Popes in some sort representatives of the popular feelings, strengthened them in their struggles for common interests, and diminished the jealousy with which a line of new hereditary rulers might have been regarded. Thus the time at length came for a formal declaration of independence, by renouncing the allegiance due to the East, and by vigorously asserting ecclesiastical supremacy. The occasion was well chosen, and the leader was not wanting. When Leo the Isaurian, in his iconoclastic zeal, decreed that image-worship should cease throughout the Empire, the obedience which after some trouble he enforced in the East was refused to him in the West. Less accustomed than the Greeks to mould their religious dogmas by those of the Cæsar, the Romans clung to their venerated symbols and effigies ; and Gregory II., as their chief, boldly confronted the sacrilegious Emperor. To the threats of Leo he replied with fiery audacity, defining the limits of Imperial authority, and defying him to intrude on the sacred regions of ecclesiastical matters. "Tyrannically you persecute us with the sword and arm of flesh. Naked and unarmed, guarded by no earthly armies, we invoke the Lord of Hosts, Christ on high, leader of the heavenly virtues, to send unto you a devil, even as saith the Apostle, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved." After this, there was little prospect of accommodation ; and at length the fleets and armies of the insulted Emperor sought to reduce the rebellious Churchman to obedience. In a previous epistle,

Gregory had proudly asserted the reverence which the Western nations felt for the successor of St. Peter, to whom they one and all looked up as to a God on earth ;\* and the result did not disappoint his sagacity. Charles Martel was too busy in consolidating his power, and in making head against the Saracenic invasions, to heed the appeal for assistance ; but the Lombards declared for Rome, and when they in turn stood aloof, a tempest scattered the forces of Leo, and the orthodox Latins were enabled to enjoy the peaceful satisfaction of excommunicating the heretical Isaurian and his obsequious hierarchy.

The breach was evidently complete, and when a restoration of images rendered a reconciliation possible, the Popes no longer looked to the East for support or protection. It is a curious evidence, however, of the subordinate place of the Papacy, that there was apparently no thought of maintaining a position of independence, and that a new lord paramount was immediately sought for.† By a happy stroke of policy, Gregory had thus availed himself of a strong popular feeling to present himself as leader of the West against the East. His keen eye had discerned the rise of a new power in Gaul and Germany, and the object of Rome thenceforth was to link the fortunes of St. Peter with those of the family of Pepin.‡ His views were

\* The passage is curious as manifesting the progress already made toward spiritual domination : — “ Quandoquidem Occidens universus ad humilitatem nostram convertit oculos ; ac licet tales non simus nos, illi tamen magnopere nobis confidunt, et in eum cujus denuntias te imaginem eversurum atque deleturum, sancti scilicet Petri, quem omnia Occidentis regna velut Deum terrestrem habent.” — Greg. Epist. § 9. (Baron. Annal. Eccles., ann. 726, No. 28.)

† It is a striking proof of the subordinate position of the ecclesiastical power that, until after the middle of the century, the Roman councils and Papal rescripts continued to bear the dates of the heretical Emperors. It is true that when, on the death of Leo, the usurper Artavasdes obtained temporary possession of the throne, the Roman notaries eagerly seized the opportunity of using the name of an orthodox monarch ; but when the son of Leo put down the rebellion, they adopted him in turn, until the Frankish alliance raised a rival to the elder empire. Until 772 the Papal documents bear the name and date of the hated Constantine Copronymus, the vigorous upholder of the Iconoclastic sacrilege. (Jaffé, Regesta.)

‡ It is not a little singular that those to whom Gregory appealed for protection against the Eastern Iconoclasts, and by whose influence the West was supported throughout the quarrel, were fully as heretical in principle, though not animated by the persecuting zeal which led Leo and Constantine Copronymus to enforce their

fully comprehended by his successor, Gregory III., who, after some overtures to Constantinople, couched in terms which insured their rejection, followed in the same path. Assuming the disposal of thrones, he offered to Charles Martel the crown of Italy as the price of active assistance against the encroaching and detested Lombards. The services of Luitprand were too recent, however, and their common enemies, the Saracens, were too active, to permit the wary Frank to dazzle himself with ideas of Transalpine conquests, and, in return for the keys of St. Peter laid at his feet, he sent only flattering words and rich presents.\*

---

tenets with such unrelenting severity. The Synod of Gentilly, held by Pepin-le-Bref in 767, while allowing pictures and statues to remain as harmless ornaments in churches, declared that they should not be objects of any particular respect or veneration. "Sanctorum imagines fictas aut pictas ita ad ornatum et decus ecclesiarum ferri posse, ut ad cultum, venerationem, et adorationem quod idolatriæ faciunt, non habeantur." (Goldast. I. 16.) Nor was this a temporary assertion of doctrinal independence; for three hundred bishops at the Council of Frankfort, held by Charlemagne in 794, condemned the canons of the second Council of Nicæa with indignant scorn. "Quam omnes, qui supra, sanctissimi patres nostri, omnimodis et adorationem et servitium respuentes, contempserunt atque consentientes condemnauerunt" (Ibid. I. 18); and Charlemagne himself lent his all-powerful name to an elaborate refutation of the received Roman doctrine on the subject (Ibid. I. 23-144), in which his only concession was that he would not permit the wanton destruction of images. As this Council of Nicæa had been held for the purpose of reconciling the Eastern churches with Rome, and as its acts had been formally approved by Pope Adrian, this was rank heresy. With all his aggressive energy, however, Adrian had sufficient discretion to gloss over this spiritual rebellion on the part of his benefactor, to whom he owed so much, and to whom he hoped to owe more. So complete was the independence manifested, that when the reformatory zeal of Claudius, Bishop of Turin, led him, against the injunctions of Charlemagne, to abolish all the images in his diocese, he was exposed to nothing more formidable than the polemical attacks of Theutmir and Dungal (Mag. Biblioth. Patrum, Sæc. IX. ii. 875). The Transalpine churches maintained their position. St. Agobard, who was superior to so many of the superstitions of his time, in his treatise "De Picturis et Imaginibus" (p. 212 of the edition of Pap. Masson, — carefully suppressed in the Mag. Biblioth. Patrum), was not disposed to allow them even as ornaments; while the Council of Paris in 825 (Goldast. I. 154, — not admitted into the great collections of Councils) reaffirmed the doctrines of that of Frankfort.

\* Gregory's epistle says: "Conjuro te per Deum vivum et verum, et per ipsas sacratissimas claves confessionis beati Petri, quas vobis *ad regnum* direximus, ut non præponas amicitias regum Longobardorum," etc. (Baronius, ann. 740, No. 22.) It is singular, however, that the Frankish historians, while proudly relating the embassies and the insignia laid before Charles, do not allude to the supremacy of which they were the emblems. (Aimoin. Lib. IV. c. 57; Fredegar. Cap. CX.)



Of old the weighty javelin of the Franks had earned for itself the respect of Northern Italy, when the Merovingian chiefs found leisure amid family dissensions for a wild foray across the Alps. The empire of Clovis, so long rendered powerless for foreign aggression by ceaseless civil wars, was now consolidating its forces under the stern and able hands of its Austrasian dukes, and the time soon came when common interests and reciprocal services elevated the ambitious leaders of church and state to the summit of their respective aspirations. When Pepin-le-Bref, disdainful at length the farce of delegated power under which for two generations his family had ruled, sought to unite the dignity with the reality of royalty, he seems to have felt that some unusual solemnity was requisite to consecrate to himself and his children the election which placed a usurper on the Merovingian throne. The facility with which the allegiance sworn to Childeric was transferred to a new suzerain was not reassuring to the founder of an upstart dynasty, and some new sanction was necessary to the perpetuation of a new race. Every consideration conspired to lead the Pope to gratify the wishes of Pepin. The Lombards were a perpetual menace, and the persuasiveness which had transformed King Rachis from a conqueror to a monk could not be relied upon as a safe precedent for the future. To bind a new and powerful ally by the strongest ties of gratitude, and to secure for the successor of St. Peter the disposal of thrones and the judgment of the destinies of kings, were advantages not to be resisted. When the deputation of the Franks asked the Vice-regent of Christ what choice was to be made between a king without power and a king without title, the answer was therefore unhesitating; and the Carolingian historians are careful to specify that the transfer of royalty, and the enforced tonsure of the degraded regal spectre, were commanded by the unerring decision of the Supreme Pontiff.\* The buckler of the Field of

---

This would seem to lend some probability to the reading, given in one manuscript of the epistle, of *rogum* for *regnum*, as mentioned by Gibbon, Chap. 49, note 59.

\* "Pontifex . . . . dataque auctoritate sua, jussit Pipinum regem institui." — Eginh. Annal, ann. 750. "Hildericum regem, qui jussu Stephani Romani pontificis depositus ac detonsus, atque in monasterium retrusus est." — Eginh. Vit.

March — the warlike coronation of the primitive Franks — was not sufficient for the intruder ; the Church must sanctify the transfer, and St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, consecrated the head appointed by the Pope, thus proclaiming that the suffrages of the nation were insufficient, without the blessing of the priest.\* Even this, however, was not enough. When Stephen II. claimed the services of his ally, and journeyed into France to implore the aid of the secular arm, when clerical authority proved insufficient to control the restless and sacrilegious Lombard, a second coronation by his holy hands was not only a fresh proof of his supremacy, but also the price of the assistance he desired.†

Pepin was not ungrateful. Two Italian expeditions brought Astulfus to reason, restored to the Holy See (or rather to the Roman Republic) the territory of which it had been despoiled, and added to its boundaries important provinces, which the generosity of the conqueror, careless of such distant acquisitions, bestowed on him to whom he owed his title. The union thus cemented by mutual benefits was lasting ; nor did the sagacious Frank complain, even if he recognized the fact,

---

Car. Mag. c. 1. "Zacharias Papa, ex auctoritate Sancti Petri Apostoli, mandat populo Francorum, ut Pipinus qui potestate regia utebatur, regni totius et nominis quoque dignitate frueretur." — *Annal. Fuldens.*, ann. 752

\* The unforeseen results of this interpolation of sacerdotal ministration are instructively manifested in little more than a century. Pepin's great-grandson, Charles-le-Chauve, who held the kingdom of France by all the rights — hereditary, testamentary, and elective — that were recognized by the age, was told by Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, that he owed his sovereignty much more to the episcopal unction and benediction than to the temporal power, — "episcopali et spirituali unctione ac benedictione regiam dignitatem potius quam terrena potestate consecuti estis" (*Pro Eccles. Libert. Defens. Expos. I.*), — and this after a reign of more than twenty years. It is safe to assume that the coronation of Pepin by St. Boniface is the first instance of priestly ministration on such occasions. The allusion to a similar ceremony performed by St. Remi on the person of Clovis (*Testament. S. Remig. ap Flodoard. Hist. Remens. Lib. I. c. 18*) is too evidently apocryphal to command confidence as a precedent. The whole passage is so completely at variance with the history and customs of that period, that we cannot doubt its being an interpolation of the ninth or tenth centuries, when bishops were accustomed to elect their sovereigns, and when the excommunication of a king was not the dangerous pastime which it would have proved under the early Merovingians.

† If Stephen's epistle to Abbot Hilduin be genuine, he evidently assumed that Pepin's title was incomplete without this last ceremony, — "unxi in reges Francorum regem Pipinum et duos filios ejus, Carolum et Carolomannum." — *Regino*, ann. 753.

that the Papal munificence had secured to the giver eventual advantages almost as great as to the receiver.

Charlemagne inherited his father's policy. Scarcely had he reunited the divided kingdom by disinheriting his brother's children, when, on the invitation of Adrian I., he entered Italy to put an end to the perennial quarrel between Rome and Lombardy. The resistance was stubborn, notwithstanding treason in the Lombard camp; but Charlemagne was not accustomed to leave his work incomplete. The generosity of Pepin was no longer in place, and the spoils were divided between the royal and sacerdotal confederates, who mutually confirmed the extension of territory acquired by the sword of the one and the prayers or intrigues of the other. The dread inspired by the Lombard must have been intense, and the donation splendid; for there is good authority for the statement that the grateful Adrian, calling a council of one hundred and fifty-three bishops, conferred on his deliverer not only the Patriciate, but also the privilege of nominating all future successors to the Holy See.\* Charlemagne had received the

---

\* "Tradiderunt Carolo jus et potestatem eligendi Pontificem et ordinandi Apostolicam sedem." (Gratian. Dist. 63, can. 22.) Baronius (ann. 774, Nos. 10-13) rejects this account with indignation, pronouncing it morally impossible, and asserting that Sigebert of Gemblours (Chronog., ann. 773) is the earliest authority for it, and that it was an invention of Sigebert's to sustain the political party to which he belonged in their claims of Imperial investitures. At first sight this argument is specious; but the Cardinal forgot its presence in the Panormia of St. Ivo of Chartres (Lib. VIII. cap. 135) anterior to Sigebert, — and neither Gratian nor Ivo was likely gratuitously to depress the sacerdotal character on doubtful authority. Sigonius does not hesitate to give full credit to it (Reg. Ital. Lib. IV.); while Albericus Trium Fontium, whose assertions are of weight, on account of his careful selection of authorities, many of which have not come down to us, quotes the same statement, from a certain Elimandus, and refers to Gratian for confirmation (Alberic. Chron., ann. 775). The very points which appear incredible to Baronius are contained in a similar grant made by Leo VIII. to Otho the Great, in 963. (Gratian. Dist. 63, can. 23. Ivon. Panorm. Lib. VIII. cap. 136.) At the most, the privilege was scarcely more than traditionally a right belonging to the possessor of Italy. Odoacer the Herulian in 483 forbade by edict any Papal election without his assent, — "non sine nostra consultatione cujuslibet celebraretur electio" (Goldast. III. 609). Theodoric claimed and exercised the right of selection and confirmation, — "talem visus est pontificem deligisse ut nulli merito debeat displicere" (Athalarici Const. X. ap. Goldast. III. 95); and we have seen that the Byzantine Emperors who succeeded to the Gothic kingdom were recognized as fully endowed with the right of confirmation and rejection. To minds familiar with a custom of such long duration, it might readily seem that the protection so

sacred oil and benediction from Papal hands at the same time as his father ; but in due course another generation appeared to claim the same advantages, and the kingdoms of Italy and Aquitaine were secured to the royal infants, Pepin and Louis, by the efficacious ministration of the accommodating Pontiff, who was equally ready to extend his jurisdiction in another direction, by excommunicating the rebellious subjects of his liberal patron.

Step by step the progress of mutual aggrandizement went on, though for a while the temporal power appeared to outstrip the spiritual. The Patriciate of Rome, to Charles Martel an empty honor not worth stooping to pick up, had become to his grandson a substantial instrument of influence and power. Whether the specific grant of Adrian be apocryphal or not, the confirmation of the Pope was in fact in the hands of the Frankish king, to whom each new Pontiff sent a solemn embassy to offer the emblematic keys and banner, and to ask the opportunity of rendering the oath of allegiance. Charles was the suzerain of Rome ; the Pope, notwithstanding his exalted ecclesiastical rank, was his subject, whom he addressed in the language of royal command, from whom he expected obedience, and who was not exempt from the jurisdiction which extended over the other dignitaries of the realm.\* In the year 800 Charlemagne visited Rome on the solemn errand of trying Leo III. for offences alleged against him by the factious

---

earnestly craved at the moment (for the siege of Pavia was not then ended) could not be efficient without some corresponding control, and the exact nature of the right bestowed is merely a question of terms. When the temporal authority was present and active, confirmation would imply selection ; when distant or abased, the privilege itself was merely nominal.

The passage from which we quote affords an instructive illustration of the contradictions which render the mediæval Papal historians such insecure guides. The Chronol. Pontificum, written in the thirteenth century by Archbishop Martinus Polonus, in relating the transaction, by an ingenious transposition of nominative and dative terminations, makes Charles the giver and Adrian the recipient of control over the Western hierarchy (Chronol. Martin. sub Adriano). Vigilant criticism expunged from his pages the obnoxious account of Pope Joan, but found nothing to object to in this.

\* Thus, in answering Leo's announcement of his election in 796, Charlemagne addresses him : " Valde, ut fateor, gavisi sumus, seu in electionis unanimitate, seu in *humilitatis vestræ obedientiæ*, et in promissionis ad nos fidelitate." — Epist. ad Leonem Papam (Baluze).

Romans. The position of the Pontiff was that of a subject before his master, a criminal in the presence of his judge; but the wily Italian by a master-stroke reversed the position, and created for his successors a power which may almost be said to have eventually secured their ultimate triumph. After the prearranged acquittal of the Pope, while Charles was humbly kneeling at his devotions in the Basilica of St. Peter, his brows were suddenly encircled with the imperial crown, confirmed by the Papal benediction, and the populace shouted for the new Emperor of the Romans, — “Carlo Augusto, a Deo coronato, magno et pacifico Imperatori Romanorum, vita et victoria.” Whether this clever *coup de théâtre* was in reality a surprise to the passive actor in it, or whether it had been rehearsed the year before at Paderborn, when Leo had laid his griefs before his protector, is of small importance. If, as Eginhardt asserts, Charlemagne accepted the unexpected dignity with reluctance,\* he only manifested therein his customary sagacity; for the advantages of the transaction accrued altogether to the Church. The Emperor gained nothing but an empty title, which in no way enhanced his real power, but which among his descendants proved a source of endless and ruinous dissension. The Pope, on the other hand, had revived, *motu proprio*, the glories of the elder empire. Not only was Constantinople humiliated and degraded from its solitary supremacy; but throughout the West, as the creator is always superior to the created, the Pope, although no less a subject than before, had vastly increased his moral influence. † To his successors the precedent was even more important; and the necessity of Papal assent to convert a King of the Romans into an Emperor, on more than one occasion, turned the scale in difficult conjunctures, or enabled the Pontiff to

---

\* “Primo in tantum aversatus est, ut adfirmaret se eo die, quamvis præcipua festivitas esset, æcclesiam non intraturum, si pontificis consilium præscire potuisset.” — Eginh. Vit. Carol. Cap. XXVIII.

† How thoroughly this came to be understood is shown by a passage in the canons of the Synod of St. Macra in 881, where the Bishops, in contrasting the regal and sacerdotal dignity, give this as the argument for the superiority which they claim for the latter: “Et tanto est dignitas pontificum major quam regum, quia reges in culmen regium sacrantur a pontificibus, pontifices autem a regibus consecrari non possunt.” (Synod. ad S. Macram Cap. I.)

sell his benediction at his own price. The fagot and stake of Arnold of Brescia purchased the Imperial crown for Frederic Barbarossa. Nor was this all; for even as the confirmation of Papal elections at times gave to the Emperors the appointment of Popes, so when distracted councils reduced the temporal power, the Popes in turn were able to nominate their Kaisers.\* Leo had thus succeeded in counterbalancing the Imperial supremacy which had existed for ages.

The precedent from the first was binding. Although when Charlemagne associated his son Louis in the Empire, in 813, he performed the ceremony of coronation himself at Aix-la-Chapelle, and Papal intervention was apparently not considered requisite, † and though the Pope was not asked to dignify the solemnities which marked Louis's accession on his father's death in 814, yet Stephen IV. seized the opportunity of their interview at Rheims, in 816, to crown and anoint him as Emperor, with a diadem which he had brought from Italy for that purpose, and Louis's faithful biographer is careful not to style him Emperor until after that occasion. ‡ Charlemagne had considered the Papal assent and ratification necessary to give binding force to his division of the Empire in 806, and Louis-le-Débonnaire followed his example in 817. § Still, the

---

\* Even before the close of the century, the quarrels between the grandsons of Charlemagne gave to John VIII. the power to select between them, and he who could not defend his own suburbs from the Saracens, or keep the petty barons of Gaeta or Capua in order, was able to assume the bestowal of the diadem of Augustus. "Domnus Johannes . . . . Domnum Karolum tunc regem ad limina beatorum Apostolorum invitavit, eumque ecclesiæ ipsius defensorem ac tutorem elegit, imperialique diademate coronavit, eum præ cunctis solum et specialem eligens qui Romani Imperii sceptrum teneret." — Act. Synod. Pontigonensis, Cap. I. (Baluze, II. 345). Gregory VII., Paschal II., John XXII., and Innocent IV. only carried out the same principles to their logical results.

† "Evocatum ad se apud Aquisgranum suum Ludovicum, Aquitaniam regem, coronam illi imposuit, et imperialis nominis consortem fecit." — Eginh. Annal., ann. 813.

‡ "Coram clero et omni populo consecravit eum et unxit ad imperatorem, et coronam auream . . . . quam secum apportaverat, posuit super caput ejus." — Thegan. Vit. Ludov. Pii, Cap. XVII. Also, Eginh. Annal., ann. 816. That this ceremony was considered necessary to perfect the Imperial dignity may also be gathered from an inscription of Ebbo, Archbishop of Rheims, Louis's foster-brother, commencing, "Ludovicus Cæsar factus, coronante Stephano." (Flodoard. Hist. Remens. Lib. II. c. 19.)

§ Eginh. Annal., ann. 806. Agobardi de Divis. Imp. Epist.

subordinate position of the Popes, as subjects and vassals of the Emperor, remained unaltered. When, in 815, a conspiracy was discovered by Leo III., and he exercised summary justice in despatching the criminals, Louis, irritated at this invasion of his jurisdiction, sent his nephew Bernard, King of Italy, to investigate the matter, and Leo was obliged to pacify the Emperor by a special legation. In the following year his successor, Stephen IV., immediately on his election, lost no time in soliciting Louis's confirmation, and travelled with all diligence into France, ostensibly to crown the Emperor, but in reality, we may assume, to secure his position.\* The next Pope, Paschal I., was consecrated without awaiting the Imperial ratification; but, dreading the wrath of his suzerain, without loss of time he prudently despatched a deprecatory epistle, asserting that he had unwillingly been forced to undergo the ceremony, against his strenuous resistance.† Louis's gentle character was eminently unsuited to the ferocity of the age, while his sensitive superstition rendered him the willing slave of his ghostly advisers. Unable as he was to control the fierce elements of discord around him, or to resist the encroachments of ecclesiastical ambition, his influence rapidly diminished. Emboldened by this, Paschal soon took another and an important step in the enhancement of the Papal prerogative. In 817 Louis had crowned his eldest son, Lothair, and had associated him on the throne as co-Emperor, in precisely the same manner as he himself had received that dignity at the hands of Charlemagne. In 823 he sent the young Emperor to Italy to repress some disorders there. His mission accomplished, Lothair was about to return, when Paschal invited

---

\* "Quam maximis poterat itineribus ad Imperatorem venire contendit; missis interim duobus legatis, qui quasi pro sua consecratione Imperatori suggererent." — Eginh. Annal., ann. 816. Stephen, the same year, caused a canon to be adopted in council, providing that in future no elected Pope should be consecrated except in presence of delegates sent by the Emperor, and also that no new form of oath should be exacted, — "ne vel ecclesia scandalizetur et Imperialis honorificentia minuat" (Gratian. Dist. 63, can. 28), — the genuineness and date of which have been the subject of no little controversy. An allusion to it, however, by Nicholas I., in the Council of Rome, in 862, would seem to settle the question.

† "Et munera et excusatoriam Imperatori misit epistolam: in qua sibi non solum nolenti, sed etiam plurimum renitenti, pontificatus honorem vel impactum asseverat." — Eginh. Annal., ann. 817.

him to Rome, received him with all honor, and solemnly crowned him as Emperor and Augustus,—and this, to all appearance, without the consent or knowledge of his father. Following up this independence of action, shortly afterward, when two officers of high repute in the Papal court were cruelly murdered in the Lateran, and Paschal was popularly accused as author of the crime, he endeavored to escape from the Imperial jurisdiction by hastily clearing himself of complicity by a purgatorial oath before the arrival of the commissioners sent by Louis to investigate his connection with the crime, acknowledging, nevertheless, his accountability to the Emperor by two legations despatched with his explanations.\*

These efforts of the Holy See to shake off the Imperial authority called for some counter-demonstration; and it is probable that the energetic Lothair was less willing than his father to permit any curtailment of his ancestral prerogatives. When, therefore, Paschal died during the next year, and his successor, Eugenius II., after a hotly contested election, contented himself, after consecration, with sending a legate to apprise the Emperors of the fact, Lothair proceeded at once to Rome. Eugenius was compelled to subscribe a written oath of allegiance, and another oath was administered to all the inhabitants, lay and clerical, in which they swore not only fidelity to the Emperors, but also that they would never consent to the installation of a Pope elect until after he had taken a similar oath to a special Imperial commissioner.† Accordingly, when, in 827, the chair of St. Peter was again vacant, the consecration of Gregory IV. was postponed until the arrival of an en-

---

\* Eginh. Annal., ann. 823.

† “Et ille qui electus fuerit, me consentiente, consecratus Pontifex non fiat, priusquam tale sacramentum faciat in præsentia missi domini Imperatoris et populi, cum juramento quale dominus Eugenius Papa sponte pro conservatione omnium factum habet per scriptum.” (Baluze, I. 648.) The expression “pro conservatione omnium” renders it probable that the oath was not taken by Eugenius without some decided proceedings on the part of Lothair, whose exercise of sovereign authority is further shown by his edict limiting the extent of suffrage in future elections. (Ibid. II. 317.) The change which occurred during the century is well exhibited by comparing this with the oath taken by the Romans on the coronation of the Emperor Arnoul in 896, in which the Papal claim to their obedience is expressly reserved,—“salvo honore et lege mea, atque fidelitate domni Formosi Papæ, fidelis sum et ero omnibus diebus vitæ meæ Arnulfo imperatori.” (Annal. Fuldens., ann. 895.)



voy with powers to confirm the election. The effort, however, was too late. Events were hurrying on which were destined at length to render all such precautions futile, and Lothair himself was one of the chief instruments in the hands of Providence by which was wrought out the revolution of European institutions, resulting in the power of the priesthood and the eventual irresponsible supremacy of the Pope.

The turbulent ambition of Lothair and his two brothers, their hatred of their stepmother, Judith, and their envy of their half-brother, Charles-le-Chauve, the youngest, best, and most beloved of the children of Louis, filled the rest of his miserable reign with open war or secret intrigues. His death added fresh fuel to the flame, and until the exhausted combatants swore a hollow truce at the Treaty of Verdun, in 843, the Empire was a scene of universal confusion. This parricidal and fratricidal strife, continued with scanty intermissions until the close of the century, reduced the royal power to a shadow. Truth, faith, loyalty, patriotism, all the virtues which give stability to governments, seemed unknown. On every side the chiefs and deputies of the nominal monarch, striving for independence and hereditary authority, were transferring their allegiance, and wringing fresh concessions from the infatuated brothers, as the price of their fidelity or of their treachery. On every side the Northmen poured in upon the unguarded coasts, ascended the rivers, and, gathering confidence from almost uninterrupted success, ravaged every portion of France and of the fertile Rhinelands. On the west the Bretons, on the east the Wends and Serbs, on the south the active and unsparing Saracens, released from the terror of the invincible Charles, revenged the wrongs and humiliations of generations. Faction in the council, discord in the court, cowardice or treachery in the field, could offer but vain resistance to the encroachments of the only power which maintained its unity, which understood its aims, and which pursued its purposes with energy and consistency. Nor is it surprising that the people, ground to the dust by the senseless quarrels of their rulers, exposed alike to the unchecked tyranny of their immediate masters, the devastations of civil war, and the hideous barbarities of Pagan pirates, — the people, to whom civil

government was known only as an instrument of oppression, and never as a means of defence or redress,—should turn in despair to the Church, as the only source of consolation in the present and of hope in the future,—should welcome any change which tended to elevate the spiritual power at the expense of the temporal, and should give eager credit to the doctrines which taught that in all things the Vicegerent of Christ, and his ministers, were paramount over those who had so wofully abused their trust.\*

In this revolution, so necessary to the interests of Christendom and civilization, one of the most efficient agents was the FALSE DECRETALS. About this period began to circulate from hand to hand a collection of Papal Epistles, to which the names of the early Bishops of Rome communicated the authority of the primitive and uncorrupted Church, instinct with pure and undisputed apostolic tradition. The name assumed by the compiler was Isidor Mercator, or Peccator, and as the original copy was said to have come from Spain, he was readily confounded with St. Isidor of Seville, the eminent canonist, who, two centuries earlier, had enjoyed a wide and well-merited reputation for extensive learning and unquestioned orthodoxy. Denis the Less, who, in the first half of the sixth century, made an authoritative collection of canons and decretals, commences the latter with Pope Siricius, whose pontificate extended from 385 to 399; and there is no earlier epistle, unquestionably authentic, except a single one of St. Clement, the disciple of St. Peter. When, therefore, the decisions and decrees of more than thirty holy fathers, of venerable antiquity, were presented under the authority of ecclesiastics high in rank and power, and these decrees were found to suit the wants and aspirations of the moment, it is no wonder that they were accepted with little scrutiny by those whose cause

---

\* The manner in which the Church earned the gratitude of the masses while extending its power and influence, is well illustrated in the election of Guido as King of Lombardy by the bishops assembled at Pavia in 888 or 889. One of the conditions imposed on him was, that no exactions or oppressions should be inflicted on the people; but that if, in any case of the kind, the counts did not actively interfere to repress it, they should be excommunicated by the bishops,—thus rendering the latter the legal protectors of the people and guardians of the laws. (Widonis Regis Elect. Cap. V., ap. Muratori, *Antiq. Ital.*, Diss. III.)

they served, and who were not accustomed to the exercise of strict archæological criticism. It could hardly be expected that a prelate of that rude age would analyze the rules presented for his guidance, and eliminate the false, which served his interests or his pride, from the true, with which they were skilfully intermingled. Some, more enlightened than the rest, perceiving that, if their own power was enhanced, at the same time their bonds of subjection to the central head were tightened, muttered faint and cautious doubts; but the vast majority received the new decretals with unquestioning faith; and though political causes delayed their unhesitating adoption, yet soon after the middle of the century we find them recognized with scarcely a dissentient voice.

Riculfus, who occupied the archiepiscopal see of Maintz from 787 to 814, is accredited with the paternity of this,—the boldest, most stupendous, and most successful forgery which the world has seen. Whether or not it was brought from Spain by him, or constructed under his supervision, there is little doubt that he employed himself industriously in disseminating copies.\* Another collection, somewhat less bold in its pretensions, but equally apocryphal in character, had appeared somewhat earlier, having been given by Ingilram, Bishop of Metz, to Adrian I. in 785; and it was likewise extensively circulated and cited, although Hincmar of Rheims condemns it as having little authority, and bearing falsehood on its face.† Other documents of various descriptions were

\* Hincmar, created Archbishop of Rheims in 845, thus alludes to their introduction: “Sicut et de libro collectarum epistolarum ab Isidoro, quem de Hispania allatum, Riculfus Moguntinus episcopus, in hujusmodi sicut et in capitulis regis studiosus, obtinuit, et istas regiones ex illo repleti fecit.” Hincmar evidently considers them as of doubtful authority, when he declines to cite them in support of his positions, because he had plenty of authorities from the Popes after Damasus,—“superfluum fluxi non necessaria in medium devocare” (Opusc. adv. Hincm. Laudun. Cap. XXIV). This does not, however, prevent his making use of them when later and more unimpeachable authorities are wanting. Thus (op. cit. Cap. XIV.) he adduces an epistle of St. Anacletus, whose pontificate dates within twenty years of the death of St. Pêter, in which is described a complete hierarchy, such as, in the ninth century, was looked upon as the perfection of church government,—bishops, metropolitans, archbishops, primates, and patriarchs, with the Roman Pontiff as supreme ruler, issuing, without appeal, his commands and decrees. (Pseud. Anaclet. Epist. 1, 2, 4, 5.)

† “Quam dissonæ inter se habeantur, qui legit satis intelligit, et quam diversæ

also fabricated for the same purpose, and, indeed, we may perhaps assume that the whole series was of gradual accretion, growing from time to time under the hands of those who were watching the progress of events, and who became emboldened by their success and by the ease with which they escaped detection.

Their success at first, it is true, was rather negative than positive, and the earliest practical promulgation of the forgeries for daily use would appear to be in the canons compiled for his diocese by Remy, who was Bishop of Coire from 815 to 830. Charlemagne, indeed, as early as 806, had admitted one canon into a Capitulary ;\* but in general their influence over his legislation and government is imperceptible. His power was too firmly established, and his temper rendered opposition too dangerous, for any serious attempt to limit his control over ecclesiastical matters. While he made full use of clerical influence in carrying out his views of a strong and civilizing government, obedience to his will was the condition of its existence ; nor, while he labored strenuously to inculcate respect for the sacerdotal character, would he permit the Church to exercise any undue interference in affairs not connected with its special office.† His influence was too deeply impressed upon the age to be at once obliterated ; and, for some years after his death, the Empire maintained the dignified force with which he had invested it. The virtues and weaknesses of Louis-le-Débonnaire, however, rendered his power a prize for whoever had boldness and ambition to clutch at a fragment of it, and the penance of Attigni in 822, while it degraded him in the eyes of the fierce warriors of the Franks, proclaimed to the world that priestly influence was all-powerful in the state. It would indeed have been singular if the Church had not

---

a sacris canonibus, et quam discrepantes in quibusdam ab ecclesiasticis judiciis habeantur, ut hic quædam de plurimis ponam, evidentur manifestatur.” (Op. cit. Cap. XXIV.) According to some manuscripts, it was Adrian who gave them to Ingilram, but the reading of the best manuscript is that given in the text.

\* Capit. Car. Mag. VI., ann. 806, § 23.

† This jealousy of sacerdotal encroachment is well expressed by a passage in a Capitulary directing the clergy and the laity not to interfere with each other: “Hic interrogandum est acutissime quid est quod Apostolus ait *Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis secularibus*, vel ad quos sermo iste pertineat.” — Capit. Car. Mag. I., ann. 811, § 4.

advanced in the path thus laid open to it, and claimed all the supremacy to which it was invited. Accordingly, we find that the bishops soon appear as the ruling order in the state, sitting in judgment on the Emperor, deposing, absolving, and reinstating him by turns, — doing, in the name of Heaven, that which the reckless nobles still shrank from assuming as an earthly prerogative. This placed a material power in hands well qualified to use and extend it; and though, during those busy years of anarchy and strife, the Church had enough to do in protecting her property from the hands of the spoiler, and was unable to combine her forces seriously and steadily for the attainment of new legal privileges and exemptions, still the influence of the prelates, as potential members of the civil government, vastly increased the political weight of the ecclesiastical body, and placed them in a position to make good whatever encroachments they might seek to establish. In restoring order after the long and lawless struggle, it was also comparatively easy to assume that the pretensions then first seriously brought forward were merely the resuscitation of rights, familiar to the past generation, which had been trampled upon and forgotten in the fury of civil war.\* At the same time, the comparative quiet which succeeded the Treaty of Verdun soon made manifest the new and pressing need of a strong ecclesiastical government. The empire of Charlemagne was then finally divided, and the nationalities of Europe spontaneously separated themselves into the limits which, with but little alteration, they have preserved to the present day. Had the Church remained under secular control, as before, it would have been split into fragments; all unity would have been lost, and the spiritual tyranny which alone could maintain the influence of religion amid the barbarous turmoil of the age would have become impossible. To elevate the sanctity of the sacerdotal character; the power of the bishops over the laity and the inferior clergy; the control of the metropolitans over their suffragans; to emancipate all from subjection to the tem-

---

\* “*Jura sacerdotum penitus eversa ruerunt.  
Divinæ jam legis amor terrorque recessit,  
Et scita jam canonum cunctorum calce teruntur.*”

Flor. Diac. de Divis. Imp.

poral power, and to bind them more strongly than ever to the foot of the pontifical throne,—such was the only apparent solution to present and prospective difficulties. If it were carried out by fraud and forgery, we are almost tempted, in view of the result, to pardon the baseness of the attempt, and to adopt the doctrine of the justification of means by ends.

The date, the author, and the special object of the False Decretals have given rise to keen speculation and fierce dispute, particularly among modern German critics, whose theories, more or less plausible, it would be useless to recapitulate or refute here. The views of the Ballerini, Wasserschleben, Gfrörer, Walter, Knust, Hefele, Phillips, and others, may be found well summed up and stated by Heinrich Denzinger;\* but the chief interest of the discussion arises from its showing how the over-subtile refinements requisite to support a preconceived opinion may mislead intelligent investigators. Those who see in these forgeries an effort merely to increase the power of the Pope, or, on the other hand, to enlarge the prerogatives of the metropolitans, or, again, to render the bishops independent, take a view by far too narrow of the causes and consequences of the attempt. In fact, the philosophizing tendencies of recent historical criticism have led to the assumption that the influence of the False Decretals had previously been greatly overrated. This we take to be an error, easily committed by those to whom the novelty of a brilliant sophism is more attractive than a commonplace truth, and, when time and space permit, we may perhaps undertake the proof of our position. Meanwhile we may briefly remark, that although we have described some of the causes which contributed to the triumphant success of the undertaking, it by no means follows that those causes would have produced the same effects had they not thus been artificially directed into the desired channel. It is certain that about the middle of the century a great and silent revolution occurred in the relations of church and state, and that these new canons were the instrument with which the ecclesiastical party worked upon the general popular readiness, the existence of which we have assumed, to submit to such a change of masters. To es-

---

\* *Eclogæ et Epitrisis eorum quæ a recentioribus criticis de Pseudoisidorianis Decretalibus statuta sunt.* (Migne, *Patrologiæ* Tom. CXXX.)

timate the influence of these canons and the other cognate forgeries, requires an attentive examination of the jurisprudence and legislation of the period, which they interpenetrate to an extent that shows how thoroughly they modified the condition of society in all its ramifications. Interpolated into codes of laws, adopted, amplified, and extended in canons of Councils and decretals of Popes, they speedily became part and parcel of the civil and ecclesiastical polity of Europe, leaving traces on the institutions which they affected for centuries. The Carolingian Capitularies, which they distorted from their original purport, were the recognized laws of the western and northern portions of the Empire, until swallowed up by the all-pervading influence of feudalism, and even then they were constantly appealed to as authority. As late as the close of the eleventh century, they were cited in a suit between Centulla IV. of Béarn and the Bishop of Lescar; \* in 1208, Otho IV., at his election, took an oath with the princes of the Empire, in which they mutually bound themselves to preserve intact all the laws of Charlemagne; † the *Speculum Suevicum*, which, from the thirteenth century, was the municipal code of Southern Germany, declares that all law is founded on the legislation of Charlemagne and of the Popes, ‡ and it is itself, to a considerable extent, based on the Third Book of the Capitularies; while some of the Capitularies, relating more particularly to ecclesiastical matters, being drafted into the collections of canons, were perpetuated through Burekhardt, Ivo, and Gratian, during the whole mediæval period.

If the False Decretals thus left their impress on secular legislation, their overwhelming force in modifying the position and organization of the Church may easily be conceived. The pretensions and privileges conferred on the hierarchy became the most dearly-prized and frequently-quoted portion of the canon law. In each struggle with the temporal authority, it was the arsenal from which were drawn the most effective

---

\* Mazure et Hatoulet, Fors de Béarn, p. xxxviii.

† "Ibi Rex primo, deinde cæteri principes jurant . . . omnia etiam jura a Karolo magno instituta observanda et tuenda."—Godefrid. S. Pantal. *Annal.*, ann. 1208.

‡ "Itaque nullum jus provinciale aut feudale subsistit aliter quam quatenus a clero Romano et ex Regis Caroli legibus derivata est."—*Juris Provin. Alam.* Introit. § 31.

weapons, and after each successful struggle the sacerdotal combatants had higher vantage-ground for the ensuing conflict. The satire of Rabelais loses its usual extravagance, when, dwelling upon the virtues of the "sacrosainctes Decretales," — the development and application of the forgeries of the eighth and ninth centuries, — he exclaims: "Qui faict le saint siege Apostolicque en Romme de tout temps et aujourd'hui tant redoutable en l'univers que il fault, ribon ribaine, que tous roys, empereurs, potentatz et seigneurs pendent de luy, tieignent de luy, par luy soyent couronnez, confirmez, autorisez, vieignent la boucquer et se prosterner a la mirifique pantofle de laquelle auez veu le pourtraict? Belles Decretales de Dieu!"\* For eight centuries the authority of Isidor and Ingilram was unquestioned; nor, when antiquarian research began to develop the anachronisms with which the forgeries

---

\* When Rabelais undertook to describe "Comment par la vertus des Decretales est lor subtillement tyré de France en Romme," he only enlarged upon a theme which had long been keenly appreciated. In 1372, we find the whole body of the clergy of Mainz binding themselves by a solemn agreement not to pay a tithe levied upon them by the Court of Rome, and complaining bitterly of the exactions to which they were continually exposed, — "et propter exactiones Papales per plurimas, in his terris clerici ad magnam paupertatem redacti. . . . Quod sedes ipsa, contra morem veterem Sanctorum Patrum, ad partes externas nunquam his temporibus mittit predicatorum vel viciorum correctores, sed cottidie mittit bene pompizantes, et facta sua proprie dirigentes, pecuniarum peritissimos exactores." (Guden Cod. Diplom., T. III. p. 503.) More than a century previous, "Goliath Episcopus" dwells upon it with a pertinacity which shows its importance at that period, and promulgates the discovery,

"Romani capitulum habent in decretis,  
ut petentes audiant manibus repletis;  
dabis, aut non dabitur, petunt quando petis;  
qua mensura seminas et eadem metis."

And earlier still, in the eleventh century, the implacable virtue of St. Peter Damiani exclaims, with indignant sorrow,

"Heu! Sedes Apostolica  
Orbis olim gloria,  
Nunc, pro dolor! efficeris  
Officina Simonis." — Epist. IX. Lib. IV.

That the moneyed value of the Papal authority was known and acted upon even in the period which we have been considering, is well illustrated by the fact that Lupus, Abbot of Ferrières, a man of the highest ecclesiastical repute and consideration, when about to visit Rome on business with the Court of St. Peter, begs his friends for presents to take with him, assuming, as a matter of course, that nothing could be expected of the Pope without them. "Et quoniam in conficiendis rebus apostolici notitia indigebo, ea vero sine munerum intercessione inire commode non potest." — Lupi Ferrar. Epist. 68.



were filled, did the Church abandon her champions. The learning of Blondel, it is true, silenced his adversaries, but the *Decretum Gratiani* could not be mutilated, and the false and genuine continued to appear in inextricable juxtaposition. Even in our own day apologists are to be found who cannot see that the teachings of Isidor are not in accordance with the history and doctrines of the primitive Apostolic Church, or that they were innovations on the established order of things existing at the time of their production.\*

To show how great was the revolution which took place about the period when the forgeries appeared, and how intimate was the connection between those forgeries and the changes which they were designed to create, will require an examination into a few points relating to the mutual dependence of the secular and clerical powers as they existed before and after the dissemination of the doctrines of Isidor. The coincidence between these events is so remarkable, that the much-abused argument, *post hoc igitur propter hoc*, may fairly be applied to them as respectively cause and effect. To do this, however, would require more space than is at present at our disposal: in a future number we hope to recur to the subject, and to show how, in the ninth century, the Church declared itself independent of the state, and was at the same time subjugated by the Papacy.

---

\* A recent author does not hesitate to assume that the Pseudo-Isidor only embodies the received doctrines existing at the time of its manufacture, whence he concludes, "*Pseudo-Isidoricam collectionem ingenuis juris fontibus indebito annumerari*," (D. Georg. Phillips, *Kirchenrecht*, 1851,) seemingly forgetful that, if it is only a record, and not a source of privilege, the claims it advances for the Church must be good to the present day.

The arguments of those who endeavor to prove that the forgeries wrought no perceptible change in the institutions of the period reduce themselves to this. The attempt is made to prove that the Pseudo-Isidor was not compiled until about 850, or later, and that it was not known in Rome itself until long afterward. The effort is then made to show, by the acts of Gregory IV., Leo II., Nicholas I., and other Pontiffs, that the same principles were in vigor at a time when the Popes are presumed to be ignorant of the existence of Isidor, and that therefore the latter had no influence in establishing those principles. There are several gaps in this chain of argument, of which it will be sufficient to observe that it takes no cognizance of the fact that the canons of Ingilram existed in the eighth century; that the principles therein enunciated are nearly identical with those of the Pseudo-Isidor; and that, as soon as the strong hand of Charlemagne lost its terrors, those principles gradually came into play, to be fully evoked when the tumults of the civil war were over.